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# RIVERWALK

**SAN DIEGO**

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## RIVERWALK – INSPIRATION AND VISION

A “blank canvas” in the midst of a fully-built community, Riverwalk presents the **rare opportunity** to craft and implement an **enduring, inspired vision** on a grand scale that is **uniquely San Diego**. As the ultimate re-use of an existing golf course on approximately 195 acres, Riverwalk not only completes the **urban fabric** at the core of Mission Valley, but also brings a **distinctive new focal point** to a community already emerging as a center of innovation and **creative urban spaces**. Riverwalk’s long-term vision transforms the site from a private recreational amenity into a series of **vibrant, interconnected Districts, parks, and urban spaces for the public to enjoy**. This vision, inspired by traditional urban villages and reflective of site-specific attributes, results in four unified Districts of Riverwalk.

Riverwalk draws from the qualities that make places **desirable, timeless, and enduring**: an essential mix of uses – including a diversity of homes, shops, and businesses – that balances the Districts and adds variety to the lives of their residents, employees, and visitors. **Well-defined, compact neighborhoods** put daily needs within convenient walking distance. **Attentive architectural details** and building elements suffused with tactile, human-scaled features enhance streetscape and community **ambiance**. Landscaping and building massing frame important views and **accentuate vistas**, while



providing for wayfinding throughout Riverwalk’s Districts, parks, and urban spaces. **Plentiful outdoor spaces** provide lively destinations to relax, socialize, gather, and play. A **prominent mixed-use core** at the heart of the community creates a strong identity and a special center of gravity for all of Riverwalk.

Attributes that are unique to the site and to the San Diego region further enhance the vision for Riverwalk. San Diego’s temperate climate distinguishes the region as a **unique living environment** and multiplies the benefit of Riverwalk’s parks and open spaces. The project’s **sustainable design** further builds upon the advantages of San Diego’s pleasant climate. The San Diego River, which traverses the site, will become enhanced within Riverwalk and act as an integral element of Riverwalk and its Riverwalk River Park, which provides an expansive open space amenity for the community. Reclamation of the golf course shapes new topography in a way that encourages

**pedestrian connectivity**, celebrates San Diego’s hydrological history, and creates visual interest.

The concepts listed above have collectively inspired the vision for this new neighborhood. In the end, the underutilized golf course site evolves into the well-balanced, cohesive community: **Riverwalk**.

## SAN DIEGO'S PREMIER NEIGHBORHOOD

At its core, Riverwalk seeks to enhance the San Diego River and create a great neighborhood. This effort is the result of a three-pronged approach to design and development, taking into account environment, community, and economy.

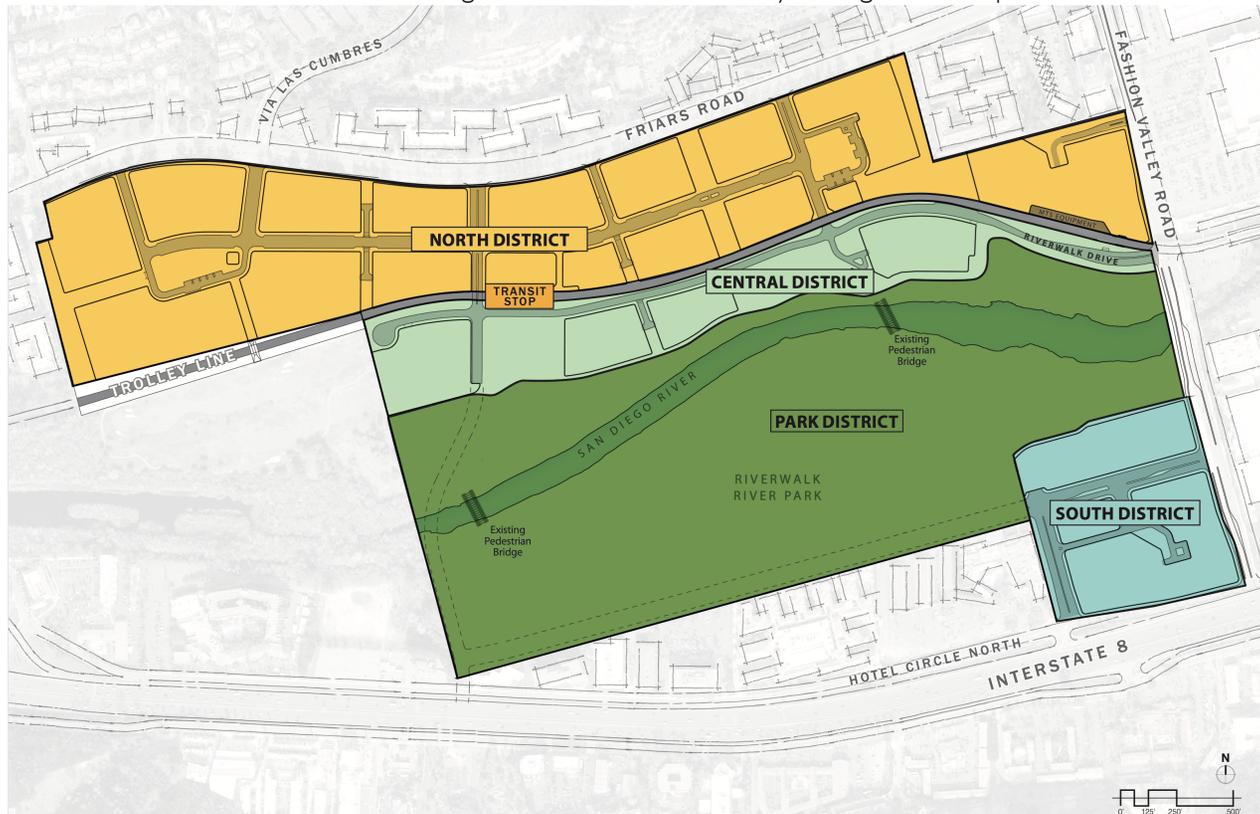
By realizing the San Diego River as a key element to the sense of place desired in Riverwalk, this Specific Plan takes the environment into account and places the San Diego River as a touchstone to the neighborhood's environmental policies and orientation.

Riverwalk incorporates a rare opportunity to enhance the river and create natural habitat within the urbanized heart of the city. Additional environmental goals addressed in this Specific Plan and by the land use plan include water conservation and sustainability that fulfill the mandates and goals of the City's Climate Action Plan. Through thoughtful

siting and innovative design, Riverwalk is a transit-oriented, smart growth neighborhood that facilitates transportation alternatives that provide clear connections to the surrounding community, acting as an invitation for all to come be a part of San Diego's next innovative and enduring neighborhood.

With implementation of this Specific Plan, Riverwalk will be recognized as a great place. Riverwalk creates a great neighborhood by taking into account community through the incorporation of cues and lessons learned from other

local landmark neighborhoods in the city, as well as input from the surrounding communities in a manner of co-creation of place. With a sense of gathering at the heart of community creation, Riverwalk provides an interwoven network of green space, connecting its various land uses into an inclusive, cohesive neighborhood.



Within this network of greenspace are Riverwalk’s residential developments, providing integrally needed affordable and market-rate housing for the community and city as a whole. To contribute to the walkability of Riverwalk and lessen personal automobile dependence, the neighborhood has interspersed retail and employment elements that also create a vibrant social fabric.

Through the infusion of retail and employment elements, Riverwalk takes into account economy and creates local jobs and promotes an authentic live-work experience. Infused retail encourages local spending and promotes a community-based ethos. The comingling of uses promotes economic vitality, where patrons can come for a day at the park and stay for dinner in an adjacent retail establishment. The provision of much-needed housing stock allows San Diegans to thrive in the community they already know and love. These various overarching drivers for Riverwalk are realized in the land use plan, goals, and objectives of this Specific Plan.

This Specific Plan has been designed with an overall theme of creating a neighborhood based on riverfront parks and urban open spaces that serve as the heart of the neighborhood to which the urban districts connect. Running through the central portion of the Specific Plan area in east-west direction, the centrally located open space and Riverwalk River Park dictate the linkage and connection of the various urban land uses and circulation system. Riverwalk provides broad range of housing opportunities at a variety of income levels, focused primarily within the North District and Central District. Commercial activity will be within central nodes of the North District and South District, to serve and supplement residential and office uses, respectively; commercial activity will also occur within the Central District. Employment opportunities will be provided throughout Riverwalk’s Districts. In this manner, the Riverwalk Specific Plan results in a lively mix of land uses that affords authentic live-work opportunities and interaction with developed parks, open space, and amenities, creating a neighborhood setting for an active lifestyle – all with new and improved pedestrian and multi-modal access to the San Diego Trolley and other forms of mass transit.

## GOALS FOR GREATNESS

Project goals were developed early in the planning process for Riverwalk. The following project-wide goals provide the framework on which this Specific Plan is based.

**Goal 1:** Provide housing opportunities for a variety of income levels.

**Goal 2:** Fulfill the vision of the San Diego River Park Master Plan by reclaiming a portion of the project surrounding the San Diego River as a common; a synergy of water, wildlife, and people.

**Goal 3:** Embrace all modes of transportation and provide a new transit stop for the neighborhood and the region.

**Goal 4:** Mix residential, retail, and office and employment uses to reduce vehicle miles traveled, supporting the pedestrian-orientation of Riverwalk and surrounding Mission Valley in a manner that furthers the goals of the City's Climate Action Plan and implements the vision of the Mission Valley Community Plan.

**Goal 5:** Allow for the creation of attractive and adaptive employment opportunities for San Diego's evolving economy and attract economic growth that benefits the City and County of San Diego through increased sales and property taxes.

**Goal 6:** Implement a long-range plan that provides for flexibility of land use intensity and density relative to location and timing in a manner that supports the long-term viability of the Riverwalk neighborhood and western Mission Valley.

**Goal 7:** Utilize placemaking to strengthen the connection between people and the places they share by facilitating creative patterns of use; paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place; and support the ongoing evolution of Riverwalk.

**Goal 8:** Support a safe community through integration of passive crime prevention design and activation throughout the Districts.

**Goal 9:** Ensure the safety of residents, employees, and visitors by properly treating the San Diego River's hydrology and potential flood events.

**Goal 10:** Preserve and enhance wetland and riparian habitat along the San Diego River, supporting both the river ecology and opportunities for the public to enjoy natural elements within the urban framework.

## CORE VALUES

### COMMUNITY

Mission Valley has emerged as one of San Diego's truly great places to live. Riverwalk further enhances this feeling by creating a genuine neighborhood within the developed core of Mission Valley. Authentic places to gather and meet friends – new and old – are provided throughout Riverwalk in the form of plazas, pocket parks and linear parks, larger park and recreation elements, and ample commercial space that offers retail and dining opportunities. By providing meaningful employment opportunities within Riverwalk, residents are able to put down roots within the neighborhood and walk to work, saving precious hours previously spent commuting to employment areas and increasing opportunities to interact with one another, either on their way to work within the neighborhood or with Riverwalk's many mass transit and active transportation options. By offering an ability for residents to live where they work, and by providing enjoyable and exciting places for employees and visitors to linger before and after work hours or whatever primary event attracted them to Riverwalk, Riverwalk's land uses, site planning, and mobility options reinforce community building and placemaking at every turn.

### CONNECTIVITY

360-degree connectivity allows for access to, from, and through Riverwalk by any number of mobility options. Connectivity also means the social invitation for all – residents, employees, and visitors – to come together and enjoy the bright fabric of life Riverwalk offers. Additionally, connectivity is the thought that by embracing the San Diego River, citizens are allowed opportunities to reconnect with nature within the urban realm.

One of the main facilitators of connectivity is the mobility hub that is located at the primary nodes of confluence throughout Riverwalk: the transit stop. The mobility hub and related street improvements are designed with the

pedestrian and bicyclist in mind to reduce demand on the roadway system. A mobility hub is a defined location where different modes of movement, from walking to bicycling to rideshare to trolley, come together seamlessly. The area around mobility hub will become a place where there is an attractive, intensive concentration of employment, living, shopping, recreation, and enjoyment around an interchange of mobility options. The mobility hub is easily accessible for those who begin or end their trip on foot or riding bicycles, and is a place where the transit rider is treated like a coveted consumer.

### ECOLOGY

In decades past, the San Diego River was viewed as an obstacle to be overcome, rather than a feature to be celebrated. In modern planning, water bodies throughout the urban areas are celebrated as a means to restore connections to nature and improve ecology. Riverwalk honors this new vision for San Diego River by restoring and preserving habitat within the heart of the Riverwalk neighborhood and providing areas for education about and appreciation of the San Diego River for patrons.

### INNOVATION

Flexibility is a core tenet of Riverwalk and this Specific Plan. Riverwalk's vision looks several decades into the future for build-out, with neighborhood longevity beyond. By allowing for a flexible mix of land uses and mobility options, Riverwalk is able to respond to future market and social demands, ensuring that it remains at the forefront of desirable places to live, work, and thrive.